CIDAC
Centro de Documentaçao
TL 3279

COUNTERSPY
P.O. Box 647
Ben Franklin Station
Washington D.C. 20044
U.S.A.

US-AUSTRALIAN ROLE IN EAST TIMOR GENOCIDE

by Denis Freney

(Ed. note: Denis Freney is an Australian journalist who has written extensively on the collaboration between Australian and U.S. intelligence services.(i) He has also done support work for independence struggles in Southeast Asia. CounterSpy welcomes this contribution for the light it sheds on U.S. complicity in the genocide being waged by the Indonesian military in East Timor. (ii)

Since 1904, East Timor has been the object of imperial contention in the Southeast Asian region. In that year the island of Timor was divided in half, the Dutch claiming West Timor and the eastern half going to the Portuguese. In 1912, a two year uprising against the Portuguese resulted in the death of 3,000 Timorese.

During World War II, the island was occupied first by Australian troops (in order to "protect" its "independence"), then by the Dutch, and finally by the Japanese. Allied attempts to dislodge the Japanses by bombing resulted in the destruction of Timor's few towns, damage to many villages, and the death of over 50,000 Timorese.

When Indonesia gained its independence from the Dutch following the war, this never included East Timor. With the help of the Catholic Church, which "seemed to concentrate more on helping its flock come to terms with their plight rather than on pressing for reforms" (iii), the Portuguese hung on to their island colony, exploiting it in every way possible.

Following the Portuguese revolution in 1974, political life in East Timor blossomed. Of the three major political parties at the time, only Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor) had any popular following. Fretilin's literacy and agricultural development campaigns, its support among conscripts in the Portuguese-led military forces, and its firm commitment to independence for East Timor made a mockery of the political platforms of its rival parties.

One of them, the UDT (Timorese Democratic Union), was comprised of those who had benefitted from Portuguese rule, with several of its leaders associated with fascist parties in Portugal. A third party, APODETI (Timorese People's Democratic Association), was created by Indonesia and was the only party calling for union with Jakarta. Its president, Arnaldo dos Reis Araújo, collaborated in Japanese war crimes and was jailed after World War II. Following Indonesia's invasion of East Timor in December, 1975, Araújo was selected to head the new puppet regime (iv).

Throughout, the resistance of the people of East Timor in the twentieth century has been heroic. The latest struggle against Indonesian genocide has resulted in the loss of at least one-sixth of its population. The world knows little of the courage of the East Timorese, and still less of the complicity of the Western "democracies" in Indonesia's bloodbath. May this article serve to educate people on both.)

In the past four years, of an estimated population of 689,000 in 1974, some 100,000 (at a conservative estimate) East Timorese have been killed.[1] This followed a full-scale invasion launched by the Indonesian military dictatorship of General Suharto on December 7, 1975. In a war hidden from the world through an effective ban on visits to the island by outside journalists and the connivance of the world press, Suharto and his military have carried out an act of genocide, aimed at the ferocious resistance led by Fretilin.

Until the end of 1978, the vast majority of East Timorese and some 80 per cent of the territory was under Fretilin control. Only after mid-1978, when Indonesian campaigns of encirclement and annihilation, "advised" by U.S. officers, led to massive destruction of

food crops and homes in the liberated areas, did starvation and lack of ammunition begin to take its toll. The betrayal of former Fretilin President Xavier do Amaral in September 1977 and Information Minister Alarico Fernandez one year later also contributed to the relative success of the Suharto regime in East Timor in 1979.

Fretilin guerillas continue their resistance despite the lack of supplies from outside, an Indonesian-induced famine, and the murder of Fretilin President Nicolau Lobato on December 31, 1978. Latest reports indicate a massive, new Indonesian offensive involving over 15,000 troops aimed at destroying remaining liberated areas in the eastern part of the country, and small-scale guerilla units operating elsewhere throughout the whole territory.[2] It is clear that resistance continues, and will continue for a long time, even though it is now on a smaller scale than in the first three years.

It is not possible in this article to trace all the events which have occurred in East Timor before and since the 1975 invasion.[3] Our main purpose will be to look at the role the U.S. government has played in aiding Suharto's genocide, and, in particular, the role of the CIA, in association with Australian intelligence organizations.

THE 1975 INVASION

On December 6, 1975, President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger arrived in Indonesia for a short visit. They were wined and dined to great effect -- off gold plates, the delicacies washed down with French champagne and wines.

The next day, 12 hours before the full-scale invasion of East Timor by over 10,000 Indonesian troops, backed by largely U.S. supplied weaponry, warships, planes, etc., Ford and Kissinger departed for Hawaii. Suitably enough, it was the anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

When they arrived in Hawaii, Ford was asked about the invasion of East Timor. According to an Associated Press (AP) report of December 7, '75, Ford smiled and said: "We'll talk about that later." The AP further reported that, according to Ford's press secretary Nessen, Ford and Suharto had discussed the Timor issue only in very "general terms" and Suharto had not told Ford the invasion was about to be launched. When questioned about reports that Ford had asked Suharto to delay the invasion until he left Indonesia, Nessen denied them.

Officials later also disputed reports that Kissinger had told Suharto the U.S. "understood Indonesia's position regarding East Timor". However, in October, 1975 Indonesian General Ali Murtopo had visited Washington, and as a result Kissinger had recommended that Congress double military aid to Indonesia to $42.5 million in credit purchases, "to enable it to cope more effectively with the new political realities in Southeast Asia".[4] At the same time, Suharto was asked not to use U.S. military equipment "conspicuously" in anything he planned.[5]

As U.S. State Department and Pentagon officials have since admitted, the arms and other equipment used in the invasion were U.S.-supplied.

The cover-up, on the part of both Indonesia and the U.S., came almost immediately. Aware that its use of U.S.-supplied weapons against East Timor broke a 1958 Washington-Jakara agreement prohibiting use of U.S. arms for external aggression, Indonesia's for-

> It would be a fair guess to say that Ford and Kissinger discussed the vital Ombai-Wettar straits with Suharto. These straits run north of East Timor. They are the only deep-water route between the Pacific and Indian oceans which U.S. nuclear submarines can use without surfacing. The alternative is the much longer route around the southern Australian coast.
>
> Suharto and the U.S. have had a long secret agreement allowing nuclear submarines this passage. They feared that an independent East Timor may have objected to use of its territorial water for such purposes. This undoubtedly was one of the reasons for the Indonesian invasion, and the U.S. support for it.

eign minister Malik, speaking to reporters the day of the invasion, stated that "Indonesians had entered the territory in response to requests by friendly forces". But during the interview, Malik also said that Indonesia's forces would be withdrawn as soon as they determine that "peace and order are restored". Why, one might ask, was it left to Indonesia, and not to the Timorese who had "invited" them to determine when their forces would be withdrawn ?

The U.S. media played along with this charade. Relying solely on Indonesian news service, papers like the New York Times and the Washington Post simply repeated once-told lies.[8]

U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE

Attempts by U.S. officials to cloak U.S. complicity with Indonesia's invasion were equally insubstantial. In order to pay lip service to the 1958 agreement, the administration, in early 1976, placed a farcial ban on aid to Jakarta.[9]

However, aid previously processed ("in the pipeline") continued to be delivered. In effect, no aid was stopped and new agreements were not even de-[illegible]d. Total aid was in fact stepped up.

In hearings before Rep. Donald Fraser's Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations in February, 1978 it was reported that "at least four separate offers of military equipment were made to the Indonesian government during the January-June 1976 administrative suspension". This equipment consisted mainly of supplies and parts for OV-10 Broncos, Vietnam war-era planes specially designed for counterinsurgency operations against adversaries without effective anti-aircraft weapons, and wholly useless for defending Indonesia from a foreign enemy. The policy of supplying the Indonesian regime with Broncos, as well as other counterinsurgency-related equipment has continued without substantial change from the Ford to the present Carter administration.[10] As then-Chairperson Fraser stated in the hearings, the "suspension" reminded him of "the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland: all we have left is the grin".

In July, 1976 the Suharto regime orchestrated an "act of free choice" in which 28 hand-picked Timorese puppets voted for integration with Indonesia. The Ford administration immediately recognized this vote as legalizing Jakarta's aggression against and annexation of East Timor. Use of U.S. supplied weapons now became "internal" to Indonesia and the suspension of aid (that never was) was abandoned.

Nevertheless, the resistance of the Fretilin forces was such that by the end of 1977 a diplomat was quoted as saying that the Indonesian military "is running out of military inventory. The operations in Timor have pushed them to the wall".[11]

The Indonesian military had suffered catastrophic failures in East Timor. Corruption at the top, lack of military expertise, and demoralized troops accounted for some 17,000 Indonesian dead.[12] In addition, Suharto was facing, particularly at the beginning of 1978, serious internal problems at home, and there were doubts whether his regime could survive. Military difficulties in East Timor compounded these problems, while leading to growing awareness of what was happening.

Washington and other western capitals became alarmed and rushed to Suharto's aid. This provided the basis for the major offensive launched from July 1978 onwards.

In mid-1978, Fretilin radio, broadcasting from inside East Timor, began to denounce, for the first time, the presence of U.S. military advisers in East Timor. The Fretilin radio claimed they were flying helicopter gunships, directing fire, and even participating in attacks. The radio also quoted eye-witnesses who had seen the body of an American mercenary who was killed in the Remexio area, near the capital Dili.

Also, according to Fretilin radio, two U.S. military advisers arrived in Dili in December 1977. More arrived in the following three months and were taken to Aileu (40 kms. south of Dili) by trucks and helicopters. The radio estimated that roughly ten U.S. advisers were fighting with the Indonesians near

Lekidoe on June 13, 1978, and in Remexio village on June 21 and 22. They were also sighted in fighting in the northwest and central parts of the country. In addition, they were training Indonesian troops in Aileu and Laklubar. On July 5, 1978, one U.S. adviser landed on Kaitasso mountain near Remexio to help Indonesian troops fighting there. The advisers were in the uniform of the Indonesian Red Berets and were being "very careful" in battles.[13]

Despite the fact that these reports were very detailed, and that Fretilin radio had been reliable in the past,[14] independent observers such as Australian diplomat Jim Dunn[15] were highly sceptical, given U.S. and Indonesian denials and lack of independent confirmation. In April 1979, however, even Dunn reported "an Indonesian official source" as stating that "U.S. military personnel had from time to time visited East Timor to inspect the situation".[16]

The U.S. military has, since the mid-1950's, maintained extensive training programs for the Indonesian military, both in the States and in Indonesia itself. In March 1975, there were 56 U.S. military personnel and five U.S. civilian experts posted in Indonesia as part of the "U.S. Defense Liaison Group" which has been operating in Indonesia for many years. Between 1971 and 1975, a total of 1,500 Indonesian officers were trained in the U.S. and more by the Defense Liaison Group in Indonesia itself. Up until December 1976, $22,680,000 had been spent on these training programs by the U.S. government.[17]

Given the fact that, since July 1976, the Ford administration (and, following it, the Carter administration) has recognized East Timor as part of Indonesia, and East Timor has been the site of the only war Indonesia has been involved in during the past five years, we can assume that the U.S. military advisers sighted by Fretilin in 1978 were probably part of the U.S. Defense Liaison Group stationed in Indonesia, officially carrying out "normal", "training" functions.

FRETILIN'S STRUGGLE

When Portuguese fascism was overthrown in April 1974, the news hit East Timor like a bombshell. Only a small, clandestine group of East Timorese supporting independence had existed in Dili and among Timorese students in Lisbon, Portugal since 1970. They had discussed and clarified their political ideas, and had established contacts with Frelimo and MPLA, the two groups which were waging national liberation struggles in the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola, respectively. But their possibilities for action were limited, as neither Australia nor Indonesia would offer them a base for operations.

However, when political rights were established in May 1974, this clandestine group formed the Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT)[18] which within a year had won the support of a large majority of East Timorese, and had raised political consciousness in an extraordinary way.

The hot-house development of East Timorese politics took the Australian and U.S. intelligence by complete surprise. Portuguese Timor had been one of the most backward and isolated countries of the world. It would have been a bottom priority for any intelligence agency. Yet, within a month of April 1974, there were three political parties competing for support, the Portuguese military was drifting rapidly to the left, and Timorese students with a Marxist education were returning to their homeland from Lisbon, "infected" from the upsurge there.

By September 1974, the ASDT had been transformed into the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor (Fretilin) and its militants were spreading out into the mountains and working among Timorese conscripts in the Portuguese colonial army in the territory. In January 1975, the conservative Timorese Democratic Union (UDT), swept along by events, joined in a coalition with Fretilin, based on a program taken almost word for word from Fretilin's own program. Within a few months, Fretilin had the overwhelming support of the East Timorese.

The U.S. and Australia were quick to

move. In June 1974, William A. Pierce, the U.S. vice consul in Surabaya, Indonesia, visited Dili for three days to check out the situation. He returned reassured by the more conservative of the ASDT leaders. However, concern mounted as the Indonesian propaganda machine began to turn out stories of "communists" in Fretilin, coinciding with the return of radical students from Lisbon.[19]

Australian journalist/intelligence adviser Peter Hastings arrived in Dili on October 26, 1974 in order to strengthen contact with Fretilin leader Jose Ramos-Horta whom he had met in Canberra in July. He also wanted to familiarize himself with the whole situation in East Timor, as well as contact leaders of Fretilin and other political organizations.

Hastings returned to Australia concerned but determined to find a neo-colonial solution. On December 3, 1974, he took Horta (then visiting Canberra) to lunch, where he introduced him to Gordon Jockel, a former Austratian Ambassador to Indonesia, and head of the Joint Intelligence Organization (JIO). The JIO had been set up in 1970, under the guidance of the CIA's Analysis Branch.

THE CIA'S AUSTRALIAN LINKS

The lack of American expertise in East Timor had quickly resulted in close coordination of CIA actions there with Australian intelligence. This had many advantages. First, Fretilin was highly suspicious of Americans in general, having read of CIA actions elsewhere in the world. Australians were, on the other hand, more readily accepted, especially due to the fact that Australian commandos had fought there during the Second World War and had established a good reputation with their paternalistic attitude which contrasted strongly with the brutality of the Portuguese and Japanese.

Hastings, himself, had a long association with the CIA, dating back to his work with Australian intelligence during World War II. While his main interest remained Papua New Guinea, he also operated in West Irian and closely followed events in Indonesia. As associate editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, Hastings was able to use his journalist hat to advantage.

Another Australian with close CIA links was (now Sir) Bernard Callinan. As a captain of the Australian commandos in East Timor during World War II, he had established close, personal links with the educated elite in the territory, and later spent many holidays there. After being evacuated from East Timor, he became something of a war hero and ended the war as a Brigadier. As a Catholic in the largely WASP Australian Establishment, he had a bit of a fight to establish a place for himself, but after setting up a successful engineering firm, he was chosen by the Australian government in the late 1950's to serve as an "adviser" to South Vietnam's Diem, who was of course also Catholic.

Callinan, who had gained a reputation as a counterinsurgency expert after his Timor experience, undoubtedly had wide contacts with the CIA during his Vietnam tour. During his time there, Australian "advisers" were being trained by the CIA under its Special Forces program.[20] After Diem was assassinated, Callinan returned to Australia to become vice-president of the Victorian branch of the extreme-rightist Democratic Labor Party (DLP) and was subsequently appointed to numerous government and semi-goverment jobs.

It was through Australians such as Hastings and Callinan, and more generally through the Australian intelligence organizations, that the CIA got much of its basic information on East Timor, and through which it tried to influence events among Fretilin leaders in particular.

This was not the first time this had occurred. It is important that liberation movements around the world be alerted to the close liaison existing between Australian intelligence and the CIA.

Australia is a long way from most other parts of the world, and little is known about it. Thus, Australian intelligence can often fill in gaps for the CIA. Two examples are well known. In Cambodia, from 1970, the ultra-secret Australian intelligence service ASIS (Australian Secret Intelli-

gence Service) acted for the CIA after Sihanouk broke off diplomatic relations with the U.S. Similarly, in Chile just prior to the 1973 coup against President Salvador Allende, ASIS operatives working out of the Australian Embassy in Santiago played an important role within CIA operations. The then-Prime Minister McMahon admitted this collaboration in the mid-1970's.

Direct American links with East Timor were scanty. With the exception of a few American anthropologists who were doing field research there, and at least one of whom Fretilin claimed was CIA, direct CIA involvement in East Timor was scarce. There was, however, a U.S. oil exploration corporation that quickly moved in to establish rights to the suspected rich oil reserves off the East Timor coast.

NOT JUST OIL

Oceanic Exploration Co., of Denver, Colorado had, in 1975, over 107 million acres of oil prospecting rights on and offshore all the world's continents, with very big interests in Somoza's Nicaragua. The corporation is small - compared to the oil giants - but in East Timor Oceanic Exploration played a disturbing and curious role.

Almost immediately after the change of power in Portugal in April 1974, Oceanic Exploration began negotiations with the Portuguese government for offshore oil rights in the Timor Sea, south of East Timor. In December 1974, the Portuguese government granted Oceanic rights in large areas of the Timor Sea, including areas in dispute with the Australian government, which made an official protest. Oceanic's rights conflicted with rights granted to a big league consortium - Arco/Aquitaine/Exxon - by Australia.

Oceanic's negotiator was J.E. Bakken, its treasurer/controller. He appointed a part-Timorese, Jaime Santos, as Oceanic's representative in Dili, and visited the territory a number of times in 1975 -- in May, July, and August.

Bakken's visits were curiously timed and coincided with a series of political crises in East Timor. In May 1975, the UDT broke off its coalition with Fretilin and began a rabid anti-communist campaign against its former ally. In July, the UDT was preparing for its coup, which was staged in August and coincided with Bakken's third visit.

All of this may have been coincidental. However, Oceanic's Dili representative, Jaime Santos, was not only a leading figure in the UDT, but was interestingly enough also in charge of plans to obtain a supply of weapons from Australia for the coup.

Also in April 1975, UDT leaders had visited Australia after a tour of Jakarta and Hong Kong. In Jakarta, the UDT leaders had been wooed by General Ali Murtopo who was "project officer for the acquisition of East Timor" or "Operation Komodo" as it was known. Murtopo told Dili Mayor Mouzinho "you could be mayor of Jakarta one day" and boasted that the Indonesian Army could take East Timor in two hours (!).

In Australia, the UDT leaders met with Bernard Callinan, whom they had known for many years. He backed Murtopo's demand that they break the coalition with Fretilin, and urged them to unite with Apodeti (the miniscule pro-Indonesian group) against "communism". He allegedly said: "There's only one thing now: fix it with Indonesia and UDT and Apodeti will unite to throw communism out." His position was further supported by JIO chief Gordon Jockel whom the UDT met in Canberra. On returning to Dili, the UDT leaders broke the coalition with Fretilin, and soon afterwards set out to organize support in Jakarta and Australia for a UDT coup.

Jaime Santos played a key role in garnering support. He went to Australia and met with extreme right-wing forces there, linked with the army and intelligence, and through them arranged for weapons to be sent to East Timor for the coup.

Among these involved in this operation were friends of Callinan, members of an extreme right-wing network around a man named Michael Darby (who was later to fly into East Timor after the failure of the UDT coup), and an Australian pilot working in East Timor, Roger Ruddock, whose parents in Perth were part of the Darby network.

Michael Darby had worked as a captain in the intelligence services of the Australian Army in Vietnam, where he naturally had excellent CIA ties. The son of an eccentric extreme right-wing Liberal (conservative) Party parliamentarian, he, like his father, maintained over a long period close links with Taiwan and the different international anti-communist bodies centered there.

(Darby still operates the Taiwan Travel Agency in Sydney which functions as a de facto consulate for Taipeh since Australia recognized the People's Republic of China. It is worth noting that Darby has since been active in the Vietnam refugee movement, and as a leader of the extreme right of the governing Liberal Party in which he is closely identified with Ustasha Croatian fascist elements and with a proven war criminal from Slovenia, Lyenko Urbanchich.)

Jaime Santos may or may not have been successful in getting weapons into East Timor from Australia. Some Timorese claim that he smuggled them in by plane through Baucau airport, where UDT officials were in high positions. In any case, he was in Dili when the coup attempt was launched on the night of August 10-11, 1975 and played an important military role in it, before fleeing to Australia when Fretilin launched their counter-offensive.

Also in Dili at the time was J.E. Bakken of Oceanic. Bakken flew into Dili from Darwin, Australia on August 7, 1975 -- three days before the coup. He flew out of Dili on August 17, just before the Fretilin counter-attack, and when Fretilin had seized one Portuguese army post. Bakken got out just in time - if he had remained a few more days he might have been asked some embarrassing questions by the victorious Fretilin forces.

All the evidence concerning Bakken is of course circumstantial. There is no hard evidence that he had anything to do with the UDT coup. However, it would be interesting to know just what he was doing in Dili around that time, and his exact relations with Jaime Santos, the UDT, and the Indonesians.

The links between oil companies and the CIA are legion. Oil companies often rely on CIA intelligence to size up different host-government ministries regarding their willingness to grant concessions. Oil companies also make use of the CIA's penetration of a foreign country's labor movement in order to gauge the relative safety of doing business in a country. In return, these companies often provide CIA operatives with cover.

As for Bakken's company, Oceanic has been lobbying in Jakarta since 1976 to have its oil exploration rights granted by Lisbon - recognized by Suharto. At last report, they had succeeded. Jakarta is at loggerheads with the Australian government over the seabed boundary in the Timor Sea, taking the same position as Portugal, and, for that matter, Fretilin (who, of course, do not accept Jakarta's right to negotiate this question).

On August 11, 1975, after the night of the coup, UDT was in control of Dili, Baucau and the international airport there. The Portuguese Governor Lemos Pires, who had been sent to East Timor in "exile" by the radical Armed Forces Movement in Lisbon, and who from the beginning was reputedly linked with the CIA, ordered Timorese conscripts to remain in their barracks. UDT gangs roamed the streets, killing Fretilin members and imprisoning others. Almost all other Fretilin leaders had managed to flee to the hills, however, after being tipped off about the coming coup. Almost immediately, the UDT began to send messages to Darwin, Australia from the air control tower at Baucau airport. Reading them was the Australian pilot, Roger Ruddock, on behalf of UDT President Lopez da Cruz. (He is now vice-president in the Indonesian-puppet East Timor assembly.)

The messages were directed to "base commander, Darwin" and appealed for military supplies to be flown into East Timor to help the UDT coup "against communism" and "to remove the communists from Timor for the security of the Southeast Asia area". It named a number of areas including Viqueque on the southern coast, and Maliana, on the border with Indonesian (West) Timor, as landing areas. In a number of these messages was added the words: "Request Base Commander also contact Guam."

Guam, of course, is a major U.S. mili-

ary base in the Pacific - the nearest o East Timor. One can only guess at the eason for this UDT appeal, and whether here had been any earlier contact with uam .. or the CIA.[21]

The Australian government refused to eply to UDT requests, but arranged for Foreign Affairs officer, Bill Fisher o fly into Dili on a chartered plane, ith UDT agreement. On August 17, the ame plane returned to Darwin, with J. . Bakken on board.[22]

The UDT did not get the military aid hey sought. On August 20, after fruitess negotiations trying to get the Porguese to restore the status quo, etilin launched a call for insurrecion. The Timorese conscripts seized the rmy arsenals and within a few days conrolled Dili. By mid-September, all of he territory was under Fretilin control, nd the UDT leaders fled to Indonesian imor where the majority readily agreed o become Indonesian puppets. The Portuuese fled to the offshore island of tauro.

UDT refugees in Australia who had been vacuated by plane and air began to pread horror stories about non-exisent Fretilin atrocities. Then a TV eam from Sydney, accompanied by none ther than Michael Darby, sailed from arwin to Dili, to find Fretilin in ontrol and no atrocities. Darby lost o time in organizing a medical team's r into Dili, and quickly proclaimed is pro-Fretilin sympathies. Roger uddock, who, when not broadcasting to arwin for the UDT, bombed Fretilin ositions from a light plane, had esaped to Darwin. A new strategy had beun: win over the "moderate" Fretilin eaders and isolate the "communists".

.S. AND AUSTRALIAN INTELLIGENCE AND IE INDONESIAN INVASION

The August 1975 UDT coup attempt was crucial turning point for East Timor. : provided an excuse for the Indonesian invasion. The rump UDT and the iniscule APODETI were merged by the ikarta generals into an "Anti-Communist Movement" which called for East imor's integration with Indonesia. ie Portuguese used it as an excuse to ave the territory, as they had wanted to do since April 1974. The Australian government refused to recognize Fretilin's de facto control and even, during the Fretilin counter-attack, called for Indonesian intervention.

On the other hand, the UDT coup and the Fretilin counter-offensive resulted in Fretilin winning complete control of the territory, and, at the same time, control of the substantial arsenal of NATO-issue light arms that the Portuguese had in the country. The UDT - and their Australian and Indonesian advisers - had seriously underestimated the support Fretilin had among the Timorese people, and, therefore, among the Timorese conscripts in the Portuguese army.

The Australian intelligence community was divided on what position to take on East Timor. One section, based in JIO and the Defense Department, with some support in the Foreign Affairs hierarchy, opposed an Indonesian takeover and favored a neo-colonial solution, with East Timor as "independent" as, for example Bhutan (a small Himalayan state whose foreign policy and and economy is controlled by neighboring India). This section feared that an invasion of East Timor would lead to a long-term radicalization of Indonesia.

The other, majority group was based in Foreign Affairs and its intelligence service, ASIS. They saw Suharto as the main bulwark against "communism" and wanted to support him in all circumstances.

While Michael Darby and his right-wing group were linked more to the first group, ASIS set about finding its own sources in East Timor. It recruited an Australian hotel and plantation owner, Frank Favaro, as its agent in Dili after Fretilin won power. Favaro was ideally suited: he knew Timor well, had his own light plane, and his own radio communication equipment.

Favaro was recruited, however, without the knowledge of the Australian government which, while supporting an Indonesian takeover, wanted to keep clear of any presence in East Timor. Favaro was boasting in Dili that he was the "Australian Consul". When Labor Party Prime Minister Whitlam learned of Favaro's recruitment by ASIS, he summarily dismissed the chief

of ASIS, T. Robertson. Whitlam, soon to be sacked by the appointed representative of the Queen of England, the Governor General, was having his own trouble with the CIA.[23]

On October 16, 1975, five Australian TV journalists were shot down by Indonesian troops when they captured the small East Timorese village of Balibo. Some 450 miles away, the Australian Defense Signals Directorate (DSD) base at Shoal Bay, near Darwin, intercepted Indonesian field communications from Balibo to Batugade (an Indonesian-occupied village right on the border between East and West Timor). The communications were from the Indonesian forces which had just killed the Australian journalists. Within hours, news of their murder was on the desks of the JIO, government departments, the Prime Minister, and other ministers. Yet, to this day, the Australian government maintains that it has no "evidence" that the journalists were killed by Indonesian troops.[24]

The DSD, under the secret United Kingdom-USA Treaty of 1952 (to which Australia is also a signatory), is closely coordinated into the network of over two thousand U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) listening posts around the world. NSA officers are present in all DSD posts, many of which are situated around Darwin, to spy on Southeast Asia and further afield. Fifty NSA officers work out of the DSD's Melbourne Albert Park headquarters alone.[25] The DSD undoubtedly sent the information from Balibo on to the NSA, and, therefore, through to other U.S. intelligence agencies.

Given the undisputed ability of the DSD/NSA to monitor short-range and low-frequency field radio communications in East Timor, the question arises as to what use was made of Fretilin communications intercepted during this period, and particularly after the December invasion. Fretilin used Portuguese field radios of a type freely available to Western intelligence services. In the past, for example, the NSA has boasted of the role it played in locating Che Guevara's guerillas in the Bolivian jungles through their radio communications, thus enabling the CIA-trained Bolivian troops to track him down and kill him.

In December 1978, 2,500 Indonesian troops launched a massive operation to kill or capture Fretilin President Nicolau Lobato, who had circulated freely through the mountains of East Timor for three years since the 1975 invasion. When he was killed on December 31, 1978, he had a transmitter with him.

This operation occurred a few months after Fretilin had charged that U.S. military advisers were fighting alongside Indonesian troops in East Timor. While there are other facts which may have led to the location of Nicolau Lobato, it can not be ruled out that the DSD/NSA played a role. Indonesia's own attempts to jam Fretilin radio communications with the outside world have proved signally inept.[26]

THE COVER-UP

From September until December 1975, Fretilin controlled East Timor, with the exception of a few border villages taken by Indonesian troops from October onwards. Fretilin opened the country to journalists and observers. At least one group of journalists - a Japanese TV team - acted as Indonesian spies, showing their film to General Ali Murtopo in Jakarta before returning to Tokyo.

The independent journalists who entered East Timor witnessed the progress made by Fretilin in solving food problems, the success of their literacy campaigns, and their efforts in repelling Indonesian border attacks. Fretilin leaders proclaimed independence on November 28, 1975 after the Portuguese government refused to return to East Timor in order to resume the decolonization process, and after Indonesian troops launched a major attack on Atabae, only 30 kms. from the capital Dili.

On December 2, 1975, the International Red Cross in Dili received a warning from Australian Foreign Affairs saying that Indonesian troops would kill any Australian remaining in East Timor. This information was no doubt also from a DSD/NSA intercept or other intelligence sources. The Red Cross (staffed mainly by Australian doctors)

and all Australian journalists and residents, with one exception, were evacuated by the Australian Air Force a few days before the invasion. The one person who did not leave, Australian journalist Rodger East, was killed by the Indonesian troops on the day of the invasion.

These threats and murders (five journalists had already been murdered in October) by the Indonesians were "evidence of a final effort by Indonesia to clear the territory of foreign observers before the invasion began".[27] It was important, so reasoned Indonesia, that no independent observers be present. This applied especially to the Red Cross, whose absence "would mean that the important work of enforcing the Geneva conventions could not be done".[28]

The Australian government knew that the invasion was about to occur but remained silent and thereby actively collaborated in Indonesia's plans to "integrate" East Timor. As early as October 29, 1975, the Australian Ambassador to Jakarta, Richard Woolcott, cabled advice to the Foreign Affairs Department that "Australian knowledge of Indonesia's intervention be concealed" to avoid complications with Indonesia.[29]

Since the invasion, one of the major roles of U.S. intelligence agencies has been to help in the cover-up of the genocide carried out by Suharto's troops. In Congressional hearings in 1977 and 1978, and most recently in November 1979, U.S. State Department officials have quoted "our own intelligence"[30] as placing the death toll at "probably under 10,000". Such figures are a gross and conscious underestimation of the death toll.

For example, the then-Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Adam Malik, said on March 31, 1977: "The total (death toll) may be 50,000 or perhaps 80,000. But what does this mean if compared with 600,000 who wanted to join Indonesia ? What is the big fuss ?"[31] When faced with this statement, a State Department official told the Australian Broadcasting Commission: "If Malik said this, he is wrong."[32] Obviously, the CIA knows best !

The cover-up continues: U.S. Ambassador Edward Masters, told a Congressional hearing in December 1979 that he has not followed up reports of Indonesian forces using starvation as a means of fighting Fretilin "because he did not think such a policy existed".[33] Masters, listed in the volume 4, no. 1 issue of CounterSpy as an intelligence operative in Jakarta during the bloody Suharto coup in 1965, is no stranger to the art of cover-up for mass murder.

American Catholic Relief Service, which has a long history of collaboration with the CIA and U.S. military operations, is now in East Timor, supposedly to provide famine relief for the 240,000 East Timorese herded into Indonesian concentration camps. CRS has been denounced even by Indonesian Catholic Church sources as "just functioning as a link between the Indonesian Army and the U.S. AID" which "should not be described as a Church programme".[34]

True, CRS's Frank Carlin said in Dili in late October 1979, that East Timor was the worst situation he has seen "in 14 years of relief work in Asia" while an International Red Cross official said it was "as bad as Biafra and potentially as serious as Kampuchea".[35] Still, this did not prevent CRS's regional director Amando Sonaggere from telling a U.S. Congressional hearing just one month later that this situation "no longer existed" (!)[37]. In other words, a situation which "might be worse that Kampuchea" had been solved in little over a month!

CONCLUSION

The role of the U.S. government, the CIA/NSA, and their Australian collaborators in East Timor is another example of support for genocide which joins a long list of similar cases that have been chronicled in CounterSpy and other journals.

The Carter and Ford administrations have been accomplices in the massacre of anywhere between one-in-ten (Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar's latest figure)[38] and one-in-two Timorese.[39]

Those figures are hard to equal. It is time the American people knew the facts and moved to end this genocide done in their name.

FOOTNOTES

i) See Denis Freney, The CIA's Australian Connection, 1977, publ. by Denis Freney, P.O. Box A716, Sydney South, NSW.2000

ii) See Denis Freney, Timor: Freedom Caught Between the Powers, Spokesman Books, London, 1975

iii) See Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, The Political Economy of Human Rights, Vol.1, The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism, South End Press, Boston, 1979

iv) ibid.

1) Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar admitted 60,000 dead (London Financial Times, November 16, 1979) while a former Australian diplomat in Jakarta, Peter Rodgers estimated 100,000 dead (Sydney Morning Herald, October 31, 1979). Other independent observers estimate between 100,000 and 300,000 dead. For more complete analysis, see East Timor News, Nos. 60-63.

2) The Australian, December 15-16, 1979 and reports gathered by the author.

3) There are a number of books available, e.g. Jill Jolliffe, East Timor: Nationalism and Colonialism, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1978, for events up to the invasion; Arnold Kohen and John Taylor, An Act of Genocide: Indonesia's Invasion of East Timor, Tapol, England, 1979. East Timor News has covered events for the past three years (ETNA, 4th floor, 232 Castlereagh St., Sydney NSW.2000).

4) Melbourne Age, October 22, 1975.

5) National Times (Sydney), October 13-18, 1975.

6) U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Hearings on "Human Rights in East Timor and Use of U.S. Equipment by Indonesian Armed Forces", March 23, 1977.

7) New York Times, December 8, 1975.

8) Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, The Political Economy of Human Rights, Vol.1, The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism, South End Press, Boston, 1979, pp. 146, 147.

9) cf supra, # 6

10) U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on International Organizations, "U.S. Policy on Human Rights and Military Assistance: Overview and Indonesia" February 15, 1978, pp. 36, 37; cited as in Chomsky and Herman, The Washington Connection, p. 145.

11) International Herald Tribune, December 5, 1977.

12) Fretilin radio broadcasts in September, 1978 estimated 20,000 Indonesian soldiers killed in East Timor. An Indonesian official source estimated in November, 1979 a total of 17,000 Indonesians killed (a private source to the author). A UPI report from Jakarta (The Australian, November 8, 1979) quoted Indonesian military sources as admitting that Indonesian forces had "suffered high casualties" in fighting Fretilin.

13) East Timor News, No. 38, July 27, 1978; and previous issues.

14) Details of the massacre in Dili on days of the invasion in December, 1975 given by Fretilin radio have since been confirmed, including officially by Indonesians. Fretilin radio claimed in November, 1976 that Indonesian forces were using napalm, but in May, 1977 said they had stopped using napalm after worldwide protests. Reports of scale of fighting etc., given by Fretilin have since been confirmed.

15) Jim Dunn was Australian Consul in East Timor under the Portuguese, an Australian diplomat in many cities including Moscow, and, for a period, an analyst with the Joint Intelligence Organization (JIO). He is now in charge of the South-East section of the Parliamentary Research Service, and has exposed Indonesian atrocities in East Timor.

16) In a Parliamentary Research Paper, see East Timor News, No. 53, May 3, 1979.

17) East Timor News, No. 38

18) ASDT -- Timorese Social Democratic Association, renamed Fretilin in September, 1974. The other two parties were UDT (Timorese Democratic Union) formed by a conservative elite, which

followed a Spinolista position, and APODETI (Timorese Peoples Democratic Association), a very small group favoring integration with Indonesia. All were formed in May, 1974.

19) These "ex-students" such as Mau-Lear, Sa'he and Hamis Basserwan are now leading the guerilla struggle in East Timor.

20) CIA collaborator and Australian journalist Denis Warner in ABC broadcast on August 28, 1977.

21) For coverage of these events see Denis Freney, Timor: Freedom Caught Between the Powers, Spokesman Books, London, 1975. The UDT message to Darwin were reprinted in part in the Sydney Morning Herald, August 18, 1975. (Originals in possession of the author).

22) Bill Fisher has since turned up in another potential trouble spot -- the New Hebrides -- as Australian Consul. The New Hebrides are soon to become independent under the Vanuaaku Pati, which won 70 per cent of the vote in the recent elections. Right-wing millionaires Michael Oliver and Harold Peacock, linked with ex-CIA mercenaries around one Mitchell Livingston Werbell, are planning a coup there... (see Melbourne Age, April 11, 1979 and Seli Hoo, No. 8, May 1979; for full exposure). The New Hebrides are a joint British-French colony in the South Pacific, east of the Australian coast.

3) For background on Australian intelligence links with the CIA, and the role of the CIA in the overthrow of the Australian Labor Party government November, 1975, see Denis Freney, The CIA's Australian Connection.

24) "Death at Balibo", a lengthy investigation by Hamish McDonald, National Times (Sydney), July 7, 1979.

25) National Times (Sydney), May 23-28, 1977

26) The Campaign for Independent East Timor maintained clandestine two-way radio contact from Darwin, Australia, with Fretilin radio in East Timor from immediately after the invasion until the surrender of Fretilin Information Minister Alarico Fernandez in December, 1978. On a number of occasions the Indonesians attempted to jam the radio contact. It was discovered that jamming only occurred between 9am and 5pm each day, and not on weekends. Australian security police twice seized the underground radio in Darwin.

27) see Chomsky and Herman, The Washington Connection, p. 144.

28) ibid.

29) ibid.

30) For example, evidence of Robert B. Oakley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, cf supra, # 6.

31) Melbourne Age and Canberra Times, April 1, 1977.

32) ABC Radio program "AM", April 1, 1977.

33) The Australian, December 6, 1979.

34) Australian Council for Overseas Aid report on East Timor, reprinted in full in East Timor News, No.61-62, November 22, 1978.

35) Sydney Morning Herald, October 31, 1979.

36) Canberra Times, November 3, 1979.

37) The Australian, December 6, 1979.

38) London Financial Times, November 16, 1979.

39) see cf supra, # 1